Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend Claims 19, 22-27, 37-39, 43-53, 58, and 76, and add new Claims 78-79 as indicated in the following Listing of Claims.

Listing of Claims:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the ~~whole cross section~~ entire thickness thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition and having a particle size in the range of 0.5 mm to 30 mm and a thickness in the range of 1.0 μm to 400 μm~~;~~

~~wherein the organic polymeric material is a material comprising the reaction product of at least one dicarboxylic acid or one polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof or a mixture thereof with at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products; polyvinylacetates; or a mixture thereof~~.

20. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19 wherein the thickness of the flakes is within the range of 1.5 μm to 50 μm.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 78, wherein the at least one dicarboxylic acid is maleic acid, itaconic acid, fumaric acid, succinic acid,

methylsuccinic acid, malic acid, furandicarboxylic acid, phthalic acid, tartaric acid, or citraconic acid, or a mixture thereof containing at least two of these acids.

23. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 78, wherein the polycarboxylic acid is selected from citric acid, aconitic acid or trimellitic acid.

24. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 78, wherein the derivative of the di- or polycarboxylic acid is an anhydride or a partial ester.

25. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 24, wherein the alcohol component of the partial ester is a polyol.

26. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 78, wherein the mixture of at least one di- or polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof is a mixture of a partial ester of maleic acid anhydride and dipropylene glycol with citric acid.

27. (Currently amended) The planar structure according to claim ~~19~~ 78, wherein the at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester is epoxidized linseed oil, epoxidized soybean oil, epoxidized castor oil, epoxidized rape-seed oil or vernonia oil, or a mixture thereof containing at least two of these epoxidized products.

28. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19, wherein the flakes are present in an amount ranging from 1 to 15 wt-%, based on the total amount of linoleum base composition.

29. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19, wherein the planar structure has a thickness in the range of 0.8 mm to 4.0 mm.

30. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19, wherein the flakes are single-colored or multi-colored.

31. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 30, wherein the flakes are provided with an optical brightening agent, a fluorescent agent or a phosphorescent agent or a mixture thereof.

32-36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet containing flakes distributed throughout the ~~whole cross-section~~ entire thickness of the linoleum sheet, wherein the flakes ~~include~~ comprise an organic polymeric material and wherein each of the flakes has ~~a particle size greater than~~ a thickness ~~thereof by a factor of at least 2.5~~ between about 1.0 μm and about 400 μm~~;~~

~~wherein the organic polymeric material is a material comprising the reaction product of at least one dicarboxylic acid or one polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof or a mixture thereof with at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products; polyvinylacetates; or a mixture thereof~~.

38. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein each of the flakes has a particle size between about 0.5 mm and about ~~30 mm~~ 10 mm ~~and a thickness between about 1.0 and about 400 μm~~.

39. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 38, wherein each of the flakes has ~~a particle size between about 0.5 mm and about 10 mm and~~ a thickness between about ~~10 μm~~ 1.0 μm and about 100 μm.

40. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein each of the flakes has a particle size between about 1.5 mm and about 10 mm and a thickness between about 1.5 μm and about 50 μm.

41. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness between about 1.5 μm and about 50 μm.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is at least one dicarboxylic acid.

44. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 43, wherein the at least one dicarboxylic acid is selected from maleic acid, itaconic acid, fumaric acid, succinic acid, methylsuccinic acid, malic acid, furandicarboxylic acid, phthalic acid, tartaric acid, citraconic acid, or ~~and~~ mixtures thereof.

45. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is polycarboxylic acid.

46. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 45, wherein the polycarboxylic acid is selected from citric acid, aconitic acid, trimellitic acid, or ~~and~~ mixtures thereof.

47. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 79, wherein the carboxylic acid is a carboxylic acid derivative from an anhydride, a partial ester and mixtures thereof.

48. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 47, wherein ~~an~~ the alcohol component of the partial ester is a polyol.

49. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 48, wherein the polyol is selected from dipropylene glycols, ~~propandiols~~ propanediols, butanediols, hexanediols, ~~hexantriols~~ hexanetriols, ~~pentaeythritols~~ pentaerythritols, glycerins, or ~~and~~ mixtures thereof.

50. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 79, wherein the organic polymeric material ~~includes~~ comprises a mixture of citric acid with a partial ester of maleic anhydride and dipropylene glycol.

51. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 50, wherein the mixture ~~includes~~ comprises up to about 50% by weight citric acid.

52. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 50, wherein the mixture ~~includes~~ comprises up to about 25% by weight citric acid.

53. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim ~~37~~ 79, wherein the epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester is selected from epoxidized linseed oil, epoxidized soybean oil, epoxidized castor oil, epoxidized rape-seed oil, epoxidized veronia oil, or ~~and~~ mixtures thereof.

54. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the linoleum sheet includes from about 1% to about 15% by weight of the flakes.

55. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the linoleum sheet has a thickness of about 0.8 mm to about 4.0 mm.

56. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes are single-colored.

57. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes are multi-colored.

58. (Currently amended) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein the flakes include at least one agent selected from an optical brightening agent, a fluorescent agent, a phosphorescent agent, or ~~and~~ mixtures thereof.

59-73. (Canceled)

74. (Previously presented) The planar structure according to claim 19 wherein the thickness of the flakes is within the range of about 1.0 μm to about 100 μm.

75. (Previously presented) The planar structure of claim 37, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness between about 1.0 μm and about 100 μm.

76. (Currently amended) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the ~~whole cross-section~~ entire thickness thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition, wherein each of the flakes has a thickness in the range of 1.0 μm to ~~100 μm~~ 400 μm and a particle size in the range of about 1.5 mm to about 10 mm, wherein the linoleum sheet includes from about 1% to about 15% by weight of the flakes, and wherein the linoleum sheet has a thickness of about 0.8 mm to about 4.0 mm.

77. (Previously presented) A planar structure comprising:

a linoleum sheet formed of a linoleum base composition, the linoleum sheet containing over the whole cross section thereof flakes comprising an organic polymeric

material, the flakes being compatible with the linoleum base composition and having a thickness in the range of 1.0 μm to 100 μm, wherein the organic polymeric material comprises the reaction product of: a) a mixture of a partial ester of maleic acid anhydride and dipropylene glycol with citric acid; with b) at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products.

78. (New) The planar structure according to Claim 19, wherein the organic polymeric material is selected from a material containing the reaction product of at least one dicarboxylic acid or one polycarboxylic acid or derivatives thereof or a mixture thereof with at least one epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester or a mixture of the epoxidation products; poly(meth)acrylates; polyvinylacetates; or a mixture thereof.

79. (New) The planar structure according to Claim 37, wherein the organic polymeric material comprises at least one polymer selected from a poly(meth)acrylate, a polyvinylacetate, a product of a reaction between a carboxylic acid and an epoxidation product of a carboxylic acid ester, or mixtures thereof.